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An Interview with Emma Snowsill, 2005 ITU Triathlon World Champion



Emma wins in Gamagori, Japan - Photo: spomedis / ITU Media

Emma Snowsill won the 2005 ITU Triathlon World Championships in Gamagori, Japan on Sept 11th. This win gives her three ITU Triathlon World Champion titles; two women's elite titles, plus one junior age group World title. She is also the current Australian 'National Olympic Distance Triathlon Champion' and the 'Oceania Triathlon Champion'.

1. **Runner's Web (RW):** Congratulations on your victory in Japan on the weekend. What went through your mind as you were approaching the finish line with victory guaranteed?

Emma Snowsill (ES): That I should slow down and enjoy the moment before I take the finish tape. In the 2003 World Championship I raced all the way over the winners line without acknowledging the crowd of supporters at the event. Taking a bit of time to savor the victory and slapping a few outstretched hands is very rewarding and exciting fun.

2. **RW:** Tell us about the race, discussing each of the three elements Swim, Bike Run.

ES: **Swim:** I had one of my best swims in a competition triathlon because I had a clear passage all the way to the first turn buoy. I swam with some of the best swimmers in world of triathlon so I was stoked and came out of the water in second position. **Cycle:** I was in a break-away group with four other girls and we really worked well together which was really good on such a tight technical course. We had managed to get two minutes up on the chasing field by the end of the 40km cycle leg. **Run:** When I first got off the bike I felt terrible....heavy, drained and lethargic....it was extremely hot and humid, however as each lap went by I started feeling better and I just kept telling myself that everyone else would be feeling just the same.

3. **RW:** How did your preparation for the Worlds go?...What was your state of mind going to Gamagori? Were you confident of another victory?

ES: My preparation went well, partly because I decided to shorten my European and North American race program so I could return to Australia early and get into the same international time zone as Japan. I was relaxed, happy and excited going up to Gamagori and was able to avoid jet-lag. I go out to have fun and never go into a race confident of winning. I look at every race event in the same way, whether I have had recent wins elsewhere or not.

4. **RW:** Who did you fear most going into the race and why? **ES:** Everyone on the start list....I never dismiss anyone in a World Championship.

5. **RW:** When we talked to you in April of this year, you said that your goals for the year were to defend your existing USA triathlon titles, qualify for the 2006 Commonwealth Games and win another ITU World Championship. You've achieved the ITU World Championship. How are the others?

ES: I have already qualified for the Commonwealth Games by winning the World Championship which is amazing and unexpected but a relief to have out of the way. My competition goals did include defending my USA triathlon titles but I couldn't risk over extending myself and getting injured or ill so I went back to Australia to adjust for Japan. This meant missing the Accenture Chicago Triathlon which was an agonizing decision. The ITU World Championship was also held on the same day as the Los Angeles Triathlon so unfortunately I couldn't defend my title there either.

6. **RW:** When and where is your Commonwealth Games qualifying race?

ES: Our 1st qualifying race was the ITU Triathlon World Championship, so fortunately I am already first in the Australian team. Our 2nd qualifier will be held in Melbourne Australia on 15 October on the actual 2006 Games event site at St Kilda and I'm undecided whether I will compete or not.

7. **RW:** Have you made any changes to your training regime since we interviewed you last April?

ES: No, there are no huge changes to my basic routine, just increased intensity close to events, plus I now include Pilates in my regular program.

8. **RW:** Have you had any more thoughts about Ironman Hawaii?

ES: Yes, Ironman racing is still definitely a goal of mine, but not this year. If I had not qualified for 2006 Commonwealth Games I may have started thinking about Hawaii next year, but for now I think it will have to be a bit later in my race career....but who knows?

9. **RW:** Do you think it is possible to do an Ironman and still be competitive at the Olympic distance?

ES: I have never concentrated solely on training for Ironman distance. I don't imagine it would be possible to be winning at both distances from the same training program, however I think a triathlete could still be competitive at both distances with a combination of two training regimes.

10. **RW:** Which event do you feel is more competitive, the Ironman or ITU Olympic distance World Cups and why?

ES: It is hard for me to say because I have never raced a full Ironman event. I think they are both competitive in their own way but are very different events when compared to each other. Competition is lifting rapidly in both these type of races as the depth of female triathlete talent is increasing.

12. RW: Has your continued international success led to an increase in sponsorship offers? Can a triathlete make a good living on the ITU circuit?

ES: I have some wonderful supportive Sponsors from within the sport, however sponsorship outside of Triathlon related companies is very difficult to find and not one I have been able to secure yet....I certainly don't make a World Champion Tennis players living but I don't need to get a full time job yet...not that I would have the time.

13. RW: What's your training and competition plan for the rest of 2005?

ES: The NOOSA International Triathlon in Queensland on 8th November is my most favorite race and I want to defend my title there. The last ITU World Cup of the season series will be held in New Plymouth New Zealand on 13th November, which I will contest, then I'll break for Christmas.

RW: Enjoy your break, and thanks for doing this Emma.
